

**National Risk Management Research Laboratory
Environmental Technology Verification Funding Announcement Amendment**

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Amendment 1

FUNDING INSTRUMENT: Cooperative Agreement

NUMBER: EPA-ORD-NRMRL-CI-08-01

DATES: OPENING DATE: December 12, 2007
AMENDED DATE: January 4, 2008
CLOSING DATE: January 28, 2008

The closing date and time for postmark of applications or electronic receipt of applications is January 28, 2008, at 4:30 p.m. EST. All applications must be post marked or submitted thru Grants.gov as described in Section IV., by the closing date and time to receive consideration. No late proposals will be accepted. **NOTE: No changes are made to the closing date of the announcement as a result of issuance of Amendment #1.**

To allow efficient management of the competitive process, EPA requests submittal of an informal notice of an “Intent to Apply,” by January 7, 2008. Submission of “Intent to Apply” is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow EPA to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted proposals.

TITLE: Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) Centers

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)

CATEGORY OF FUNDING: Environment

NUMBER OF EXPECTED AWARDS: Five

This notice solicits assistance applications to operate five Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) Centers (**Greenhouse Gas Technology Center (GHG); Drinking Water Systems Center (DWS); Water Quality Protection Center (WQP); Air Pollution Control Technology Center (APCT); and Materials Management and Remediation Center (MMR)**).

CEILING: Up to \$3,000,000 per agreement (up to \$15,000,000 for all ETV Centers)

EPA anticipates awarding up to five separate cooperative agreements (one for each of the five technology Centers being competed) from this announcement. Funding for each ETV Center is anticipated up to \$1,000,000 per year and up to \$3,000,000 over the three year period of performance. However, due to potential budget constraints, funding of the ETV Centers is uncertain and therefore the amount of funding for each center is **subject to the availability of funding. However, some ETV Centers have funding levels that are expected for specific types of activities. Each Center's expected funding is set forth in Section II.A.**

While funding of these agreements is subject **to the availability of funds**, EPA provides non-monetary support to cooperators through technical Quality Assurance. Furthermore, each Center will generate program income (see Section III.C. of this announcement). Program income means gross income earned by the recipient that is directly generated by the EPA supported activity or earned as a result of the award during the project period. In the past, centers have generated program income from sources under the agreement through fees charged to vendors for verification testing of their technologies.

**COST SHARING OR
MATCHING:**

Cost sharing is not required by statute or regulation; however, voluntary cost sharing will be evaluated in accordance with evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.

PROGRAM INCOME:

The applicant's ability to generate program income is an eligibility criterion set forth in Section III.C. Furthermore, the extent to which applicants propose generation of program income will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.

The recipient will have the opportunity to generate program income from sources under each of the five ETV Centers. Rough per year averages over the past four years including in-kind and cash are as follows: APCT (\$300K); DWS (\$225K); GHG (\$270K); WQP (\$375K); MMR (no historical data). While program income is part of ETV agreements, EPA does not guarantee specified levels of program income (see Section III.C.).

GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION: Not Applicable

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION: Programs under CFDA 66.511 are available to each State, territory and possession, and Tribal nation of the United States, including the District of Columbia, for public and private State universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, State and local government departments, and other public or private nonprofit institutions and in some cases, individuals who have demonstrated unusually high scientific ability. **Profit-making firms are not eligible to receive awards under this announcement.** Eligible nonprofit organizations include any organizations that meet the definition of nonprofit in OMB Circular A-122. However, nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995

are not eligible to apply. Universities and educational institutions must be subject to OMB Circular A-21.

FEDERAL AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), National Risk Management Research Laboratory, Water Supply Water Resources Division, Air Pollution, Prevention and Control Division, and Land Remediation and Pollution Control Division

DESCRIPTION: The goal of the ETV Centers is to provide objective, quality-assured performance verifications of technologies across a broad spectrum of environmental technology categories. Through operation of the ETV Centers, cooperators will help organizations, industries, businesses, states, communities, and individuals make better-informed decisions when selecting new environmental technologies. Applicants who propose on multiple Centers must submit a separate application for each Center (see Threshold Eligibility Criteria, Section III.C.3).

EPA will not consider applications for more than one Center that are consolidated in a single proposal. Applications for funding for more than one Center that are not separate will be rejected.

CONTENTS BY SECTION

- I. Funding Opportunity Description and Information
- II. Award Information
- III. Eligibility Information
- IV. Application and Submission Information
- V. Application Review Information
- VI. Award Administration Information
- VII. Agency Contacts
- VIII. Other Information

Application Materials

You may submit either a printed application or an electronic application (but not both) for this announcement. The printed application must be submitted for the Center of interest to the address as specified in Section IV.C. To apply electronically, the electronic application package available through the <http://www.grants.gov/> web site must be used. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, you need to allow approximately one week for completion of the registration process. This registration, and electronic submission of your application, must be performed by an appropriate representative of your organization.

Agency Contact Person for Electronic Access Problem

Cynthia Johnson, phone: (513) 569-7873, email: johnson.cynthia@epa.gov

Link to Full Announcement

<http://www.epa.gov/nrmrl/tech/funding/solicit/solicitETVCenters.pdf>

Amendment follows:

AMENDMENT #1

Amendment #1 is being issued to correct the administrative error in Section V.B. as set forth below in Section A. “Administrative Changes.” In addition, this amendment will provide written responses to questions received on this announcement as set forth below in Section B. “Announcement Questions.”

A. ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Section V. Application and Review Information, V.B. Review and Selection Process.

Section V.B currently states, “Evaluation Review Process: The eligibility review discussed in Section III will be conducted by EPA personnel who are not part of the technical review panel. The technical review panel, which reviews the technical proposal for scientific merit and organizational capabilities, shall consist of at least one internal EPA reviewer and at least two non-EPA reviewers who are able to demonstrate technical expertise and a lack of any conflict of interest. The technical review panel will review the proposal against the criteria (**Criterion 1 -5**) above identified as Evaluation Criteria and rank the proposal based upon this evaluation. The programmatic review panel will consist of one or more EPA personnel who are not part of the technical evaluation panel and who are able to demonstrate a lack of any conflict of interest. The programmatic reviewer(s) will review the proposal against Criterion 5 as identified as Programmatic Evaluation Criteria above and rank the proposals based upon this evaluation. The results of the Technical and Programmatic Evaluations will be combined to determine the overall ranking of each evaluated applicant.”

Amendment #1. Section V.B. Review and Selection Process is hereby revised to demonstrate that Criterion 1-4 will be reviewed by the technical review panel and Criterion 5 will be reviewed by the programmatic reviewer(s). The revised paragraph is as follows:

“Evaluation Review Process: The eligibility review discussed in Section III will be conducted by EPA personnel who are not part of the technical review panel. The technical review panel, which reviews the technical proposal for scientific merit and organizational capabilities, shall consist of at least one internal EPA reviewer and at least two non-EPA reviewers who are able to demonstrate technical expertise and a lack of any conflict of interest. The technical review panel will review the proposal against the criteria (**Criterion 1 -4**) above identified as Evaluation Criteria and rank the proposal based upon this evaluation. The programmatic review panel will consist of one or more EPA personnel who are not part of the technical evaluation panel and who are able to demonstrate a lack of any conflict of interest. The programmatic reviewer(s) will review the proposal against Criterion 5 as identified as Programmatic Evaluation Criteria above and rank the proposals based upon this evaluation. The results of the Technical and Programmatic Evaluations will be combined to determine the overall ranking of each evaluated applicant.”

B. ANNOUNCEMENT QUESTIONS:

1. First, there are references to OMB A-122 but I believe this was recently codified into Title 2 CFR part 215. Is this correct?

RESPONSE: OMB Circular A-122 is codified into 2 CFR Part 230.

OMB established Title 2 of the CFR as the single location where the public can find both OMB guidance for grants and cooperative agreements (subtitle A) and the associated Federal agency implementing regulations (subtitle B). To date, the provisions of OMB Circular A-110 have been codified at 2 CFR Part 215; OMB Circular A-21 at 2 CFR Part 220; OMB Circular A-87 at 2 CFR Part 225; and, **OMB Circular A-122 at 2 CFR Part 230**. Once the consolidation project has been completed, title 2 of the CFR will serve as a “one stop-shop” for grant policies and governmental guidance on applicable financial principles and single audit policy.

2. On page 9 under the section DWS, are some budget figures like \$1M per year, anticipated \$100K, and \$0 funding scenarios. Should all three scenarios be addressed in the budget narrative? Later in the RFA, it was clear that the budget forms have to show how the applicant would spend the \$1M per year if the funds were available. On the forms, should the applicant show the program income expected for the \$1M funding scenario only?

RESPONSE: Section IV.B.2 sets forth “For purposes of evaluations, all applicants must propose base budget costs of \$1,000,000 per year for a three year period with a total budget of \$3,000,000. However, the budget should be increased dependent on any voluntary cost share or program income being evaluated in Section V.”

Please note that EPA funding is subject to the availability of funds. Statements regarding the \$100K or \$0K anticipated to be made available at the time of award and any other funding information is provided to make applicants aware of EPA’s potential funding limitations and that the successful applicants **must** be able to finance the Center through program income or other sources of funds.

3. Would a new non-profit entity be fairly considered for your competitive RFA?

RESPONSE: EPA fully encourages competition among eligible applicants, and we believe the EPA assistance process to be fair. The eligibility and demonstrated merits of each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the instructions and criteria stated therein. EPA cannot advise applicants to propose or not propose, but we encourage applicants to read through the announcement so that they may make the best possible decision for their organization.

4. There is an eligibility statement in the subject RFA that states “Eligible nonprofit organizations include any organizations that meet the definition of nonprofit in OMB Circular A-122.” Although we are a nonprofit organization, we are on the exclusion list under Appendix C

to Part 230 of OMB Circular A-122. May we submit a proposal in response to the subject solicitation?

RESPONSE: Nonprofits identified in Appendix 3 of A-122 follow commercial accounting practices but they are still non profits. These non profits are eligible to apply. Also, please note that in Section IV. F. of the announcement that management fees cannot be charged on EPA grants.

5. Can you clarify if scientists and engineers in federal agencies can participate in the ETV proposals as PIs, Co-PIs, or collaborators?

RESPONSE: Federal Agencies **are not** eligible to apply for EPA Assistance under CFDA 66.511. Please see list of eligible applicants in Section III of the announcement.

6. What would make an applicant competitive? Are there certain qualities you look for when reviewing applicants such as past performance history, etc aside from what is mentioned in the evaluation criteria of the RFP?

RESPONSE: Applicants will be evaluated on their demonstration of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V of the announcement. Past performance-Programmatic Capability and Reporting on Environmental results are part of the evaluation process. In addition, application and submission information is set forth in Section IV to further assist applicants in providing responsive proposals. Furthermore, Section I background and description sections provide sufficient information on historical ETV for applicants to determine their own capability to propose.

7. Could you confirm that applications must be postmarked, not received, by 4:30 p.m. ET on January 28, 2008? Is there a time restriction for electronic submissions as well?

RESPONSE: Applications must be postmarked (not received) by the closing date, January 28, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. EST. The date and time for electronic submissions through grants.gov is the same. Applications not postmarked or not received electronically through grants.gov by this date/time shall not be eligible for award consideration and shall be rejected.

8. In the past, what types of applicants usually applied, local governments, nonprofits, etc?

RESPONSE: The pool of applicants that apply are those determined eligible as set forth in the announcement under "Eligibility Information." You can visit the EPA ETV site at <http://www.epa.gov/etv/> for further information on ETV and current center operators.

9. How many applications do you anticipate receiving? Is this program especially competitive?

RESPONSE: We do not know how many applicants will be applying. We ask for those anticipating on applying to notify us merely as a measure to help us administratively be prepared

for the number of reviews that will be needed. This, however, may or may not represent the number of applications we actually receive and EPA does not consider this information releasable at the pre-application phase.

10. I understand from the Funding Announcement that many of the agreements with the current Centers are expiring which necessitates this Announcement. Can you tell me if the current ETV Center cooperators will be reapplying for another three year period?

RESPONSE: The current ETV cooperators are all eligible sources to reapply; however, their intent to apply or not apply is not releasable at the pre-application phase.

11. Under what conditions does EPA provide actual (not in-kind) financial assistance to a new Center? One or two examples would be very helpful.

RESPONSE: EPA's funding of the ETV Centers is subject to the availability of funding.

12. What is the time frame that the EPA expects a new Center to generate "program income?"

RESPONSE: It is not clear what is meant by the time frame expected to generate program income. However, because the Agency's funding is subject to the availability of funding ETV Centers shall be able to operate for the stated period of performance with program income or other source funding. The offeror's generation of program income will be evaluated in accordance with the technical evaluation criteria.

13. Is "actual" (not in-kind) EPA funding contingent upon securing "program income?" How is the "program income" related to the EPA funding?

RESPONSE: Demonstration of the ability to generate program income is a threshold eligibility criteria for receiving award consideration. See Section III.C.4. The level of EPA funding is dependent on the availability of funds and not the awardees proposed level of program income. Both program income and EPA funding may be used to operate the Centers. However, because EPA funding is subject to the availability of funds, Centers must be able to operate with program income or other source funding.

14. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research corporation. We note that we are one of the nonprofit firms listed in Attachment C of OMB Circular A-122 and we believe that we are eligible to receive funding under any Cooperative Agreement resulting from EPA-ORD-NRMRL-CI-08. We would appreciate EPA's confirmation that the Agency concurs with this understanding.

RESPONSE: Eligible nonprofit organizations include any organizations that meet the definition of nonprofit in OMB Circular A-122. Nonprofits identified in A-122 that follow commercial accounting practices are eligible to apply.

15. A “Quality Assurance Narrative Statement, if applicable” is included in a list of attachments for responding to the funding announcement. A quality narrative statement had been required under 50 CFR 30.54 at one time but is no longer included in that requirement. Section IV.A.4.a.x of the funding announcement asks for a written description of the quality system and Section IV.D.3. requires the submission of a quality management plan (QMP) within 90 days of award. The QMP and quality assurance project plans written for the project would provide much more information than the previously used quality narrative statement. Is this additional QA Narrative Statement considered applicable or necessary? (Section IV.A.4.c.3, page 17)

RESPONSE: The QMP is not due until 90 days post award. The offeror’s quality system will be evaluated pre-award as part of the project narrative discussed in Section IV.A.4.a.x.: “Proposals shall include a written description of the quality system used by the applicant to provide the framework for planning, implementing, and assessing work performed to carry out the required QA and QC activities.” It is EPA’s determination that providing the response as set forth above will be sufficient for pre-award evaluation and no separate Quality Assurance Narrative Statement is required.

16. After reviewing the Submission Instructions for Electronic Applications Using Grants.gov, we uploaded the application package to examine the required forms and documents. However, we found that the package did not contain the Key Contact List form noted in the solicitation as a required document. Is this form in fact required, and if so, will you please advise us of how best to include this form in our electronic submission? (Section IV.B.3, page 18).

RESPONSE: The form is titled “EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.” It is a **mandatory** document in grants.gov. If applicants’ are experiencing problems loading application information, they should contact grants.gov at the number or email address listed in the announcement: Phone: 1-800-518-4726; Email: <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>

No further changes result from Amendment #1. The closing date remains unchanged.